

REMARKS

Claims 36-67 are pending in this application. Applicant provisionally elects Group II, Claims 53-67 with traverse.

The Office action asserts that the invention recited in Group I, Claims 36-52, and Group II, Claims 53-67 are independent or distinct from the invention recited in Group I, Claims 36-52. Applicant respectfully disagrees with this assertion.

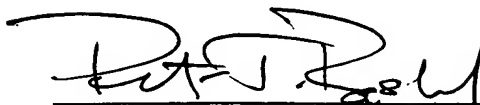
It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of independent Claims 1 and 4 are sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of any one independent claim would encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining independent claim. Specifically, independent Claim 36 is directed to a process for making a layered composite structure with an inner layer including a seam defining structure defining a frangible line of an invisible tear seam, wherein the seam defining structure is a preformed element. Likewise, independent Claim 53 is directed to a layered composite structure with an inner layer including an adhesively bonded pre-formed seam defining structure defining a frangible line of an invisible tear seam. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP §803, which states that “If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions.” (Emphasis added). It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to the Applicants and duplicative examination by the Patent Office. Thus, Applicant provisionally elects Group II, Claims 53-67 with traverse. Withdrawal of the restriction requirement is respectfully requested.

Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application is earnestly solicited. Should Examiner Ahmad believe anything further would be desirable in order to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

It is believed that any additional fees due with respect to this paper have already been identified. However, if any additional fees are required in connection with the filing of this

paper, permission is given to charge account number 50-3145 in the name of Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn LLP.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter J. Rashid', written over a horizontal line.

SIGNATURE OF PRACTITIONER

Peter J. Rashid, Reg. No. 39,464

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